Dressing to Delight: The Spectacle of Costume and the Character of the Fop on the Restoration Stage, 1660-1714

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... for costume and ornament are arrived to the heights of magnificence.
—Richard Flecknoe

The English Restoration theatre has long been associated with lavish spectacles. This is due in part to developments in scenery and machinery following the return of Charles II and the monarchy in 1660. Drawing influence from European practices experienced by playwrights, players, and audiences while in exile, theatrical practice included an increased technical potential for spectacular visual feats of scenographic and mechanical wonder.[1] Contemporary research has often defined the theatrical practices of the Restoration in terms of these advances (see Powell 1984, Hume 1976, and Milhous 1984). When considering the spectacular nature of the English stage in this period, these discussions tend to overlook more traditional elements of stage production, such as costume, acting, and scenography. In contrast, accounts from writers during, and immediately after the Restoration, regularly discuss these elements of production, assuring us of the significance of their contribution to this period's stage spectaculars.

This paper will therefore draw on firsthand accounts and playtexts from the period, as well as reflections on stage practices in the decades that immediately followed the Restoration, in order to broaden notions of what spectacle meant to contemporary audiences and how this was achieved—particularly in relation to costume. By paying close attention to the ways in which clothes were exploited for their portrayal of character and their visual appeal, this paper will demonstrate the spectacular qualities of the seventeenth-century stage. In addition, it will highlight

1 Following the overthrow of Charles I and the subsequent takeover of control by Oliver Cromwell, Charles II remained in exile. During this time, Charles II experienced theatrical delights in France, Spain, and the Netherlands, which provoked his desire to see such delights on the English stage on his return to power. The result was his issue of a patent for the re-establishment of theatre in London. Alongside Charles in exile were Thomas Killigrew, "a gentleman of great esteem with the King," and Sir William Davenant, the soon-to-be managers of Charles's new theatrical endeavour with a patent issued in 1660. The Duke's Company, created by Davenant with James II, the then Duke of York, as patron, and The King's Company, created by Killigrew, with King Charles II himself as patron, were born, giving the men the sole right to begin public performances again. See Hotson (1928, 38).

the relationship between costume, the stage, and the audience; demonstrating how the replication of contemporary fashion and society in the theatre was part of the playhouse's mission and appeal. Highlighting the character of the Fop as an example of spectacular costuming between 1660 and 1714, this paper will explore how the custom and reception of costume became part of a new and visually appealing performance style.[2]

In *The Multimedia Spectacular*, Judith Milhous (1984) argues for eight plays of the Restoration period to be considered spectacles, or spectacular, due to their inclusion of scenery, machinery, large cast sizes, and music. Here, Milhous suggests that it was the quantity of these elaborate devices that made these plays particularly distinguishable from others in the period (41-62). However, in the fourth volume of *The History of the Stage*, the eighteenth-century actor, composer, and writer, Charles Dibdin, recorded that "shew and spectacle had become the fashion" by the Restoration period, contradicting Milhous's definition by recording the popularity, and subsequent frequency, of spectacular presentations (Dibdin 1800, 4:15). While Milhous's definition sheds light on the most visually magnificent productions of the period, Dibdin's account argues for a larger number of noteworthy plays to be considered as spectacles. By taking note of the wide range of techniques discussed in surviving reflections of the Restoration stage, therefore, it is possible that a more developed and inclusive definition of terms *spectacle* and *spectacular*, as they were understood in the seventeenth century, can be established. What is more, by examining how other aspects of the performances might be considered for their spectacular potential, more elements of performance are recognised as defining features of the Restoration stage.

The second online edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines spectacle as a "specially prepared or arranged display of a more or less public nature (esp. one on a large scale), forming an impressive or interesting show or entertainment for those viewing it." It has attributes that include "a person or thing exhibited to, or set before, the public gaze as an object either (a) of curiosity or contempt, or (b) of marvel or admiration." Spectacle, by this definition, is something fundamentally visual, and aims to create a feeling of awe, shock, delight, and admiration. The term also refers to making a spectacle of someone, or something, that is "set before" the public as an object of curiosity to be marvelled at, admired, and ridiculed. The term is traced as far back as 1340, and includes reference to public spectacles such as hangings, dances, games, and religious celebrations.

2 I have placed my study between 1660 and 1714. Defining the period of the Restoration is a complex matter as its terminal date is much disputed by history scholars. However, for the purpose of this paper, the term Restoration in Britain will be applied from the return of Charles in 1660 to the beginning of the Georgian reign in 1714. See Hume (1976, 3-10) for discussion of three other possible terminal dates: 1700, 1707, and 1737.

The current understanding of spectacle has also been shaped by the contemporary discourse on and the creation of performance. In *Rite, Drama, Festival and Spectacle* (1984), for example, John MacAloon endorses the primacy of the visual in spectacle. Thinking specifically of the Olympic Games, MacAloon has a four-point framework for understanding how to recognise and define spectacle. Firstly, it is something devised to be observed (243). Rosie Findlay offers a succinct and useful summary of MacAloon's other three frames as they can be applied to fashion shows. She notes, "MacAloon stipulates that not all performance sights can be classified as spectacles: 'only those of a certain size and grandeur' designed to attract attention on a large scale" (Findlay 2017, 109). She goes on:

> Attention is crucial, as spectacles "institutionalize the bicameral roles of actors and audience," the live presence of both being necessary to the performance. A spectacle's audience primarily observes, being at liberty "simply to watch and to admire." These shows provoke "diffuse wonder and awe" rather than a specific mood, which MacAloon argues is the case with other performance genres, such as rituals. MacAloon's final criterion for spectacle is that it is a "dynamic form, demanding movement, action, change, and exchange on the part of the human actors" involved, and the spectators "must be excited in turn." (MacAloon 1984, 243-268 cited by Findlay 2017, 109)

Much like Milhous's definition of spectacle with its large cast sizes, scenery, and machinery, MacAloon's framework places an emphasis on the magnitude of visual presentation.

Richard Schechner's work on efficacy and entertainment, on the other hand, examines the ways ritual and social engagement proffer spectacle in everyday performance where it varies in size, impact, and grandeur (2013, 79-80). Schechner's efficacy/entertainment dyad explores the creation of theatre as a practice emerging from early ritual, highlighting the role of the audience in this process; an example might be the entertainment gained from the ritualistic watching of executions in the seventeenth century. Schechner helps to further develop our understanding of Restoration spectacle by placing emphasis on an active rather than passive audience. Once the audience becomes passive, the action becomes (mere) entertainment, rather than a spectacle to be part of (ibid.). Audience is, therefore, key for the formation of stage spectacle through Restoration costume, as spectacle is both "about seeing, sight and oversight," and what the audience contributes, sees and is encouraged not to see (MacAloon 1984, 270).

The theatrical spectacle identified by Milhous was made possible by the elaborate machines developed during the period, making it possible for actors and scenography to fly in and off stage. The popularity of theatre, and new legislation allowing women on the stage, resulted in larger cast sizes that were now filling the larger stages. These,

in turn, required more props, costumes, and greater use of music to fill the space (see William Davenant's Theatrical Patent 1662, and Howe 1992). By focusing on larger-scale theatrical devices, both MacAloon and Milhous's definitions diminish the effect of smaller, simpler, and more mainstream techniques on the production of spectacle—elements that have held an important place in developing theatrical styles across Europe in the period under examination. As I will argue, smaller, simple elements have the capacity to contribute to the production of spectacle. Costume in particular bridges this divide. On the one hand, costume became more elaborate and detailed, more technically brilliant like the Restoration stage it occupied; but on the other hand, costume retained its traditional purpose of signalling character and punctuating changes in plot.

Most contemporary Restoration writers rarely used the terms spectacle or spectacular when reflecting on the theatre. Contemporary commentators preferred descriptors such as a "delight" when referring to something appealing and exciting that had been presented to them, alongside "excellent" and "magnificent," and writers expressed "wonder" to indicate a particularly impressive display. While we must be careful in our interpretation of these words, being aware that meanings slip and change through time, it is terms such as these that enable us to construct an understanding of what might have been considered impressive—that is, a spectacle in this period—as we explore how costume played its part in Milhous's multimedia Restoration spectaculars.

Surviving accounts from stage managers, playwrights, and the diaries of audience members repeatedly stress the importance of a broad range of dramatic devices to create theatre that could be enjoyed by contemporary audiences. One example comes from the stage manager, John Downes, who discussed what made William Davenant's *Macbeth* (1664) so successful:

> being dressed in all its finery, as new clothes, new scenes, machines, as flying for the witches; with all the singing and dancing in it [*The Tragedy of Macbeth*] being excellently performed, being in the nature of an opera, it recompensed double the expense; it proves still a lasting play. (Downes 1708 cited in Milhous and Hume 1987, 71-72)

In this account, Downes identifies scenery, machinery, and music alongside dancing and costume as the elements that secured the success of the play. He notes the newness of everything—new costumes, new scenes, new machines, new flying witches—arguing they were key to the triumph of the production. Likewise, in his diary account of the Theatre Royal, Samuel Pepys listed the many impressive items that theatre possessed:

> my business here was to see the inside of the stage and all the tiring-rooms and machines; and, indeed, it was a sight worthy seeing. But to see their clothes, and the various sorts, and what a mixture of things there was; here a wooden-leg, there a ruff, here a hobbyhorse, there a crown, would make a man split himself to see with laughing; and particularly Lacy's wardrobe, and Shotrell's. But then again, to think how fine they show on the stage by candle-light, and how poor things they are to look now too near hand, is not pleasant at all. (Pepys 1666, 47)

Pepys, while highlighting the ordinary nature of the costumes (how "poor" the costumes look up close), assures his reader of their spectacular nature when on stage. Although the costumes were simple, they still had a visual purpose, as even laughably simple clothing and props looked impressive in the candlelight that illuminated them. Writing two years earlier, Richard Flecknoe supports the centrality of costume in relation to the period's sense of the spectacular. Speaking of the whole contemporary genre of drama Flecknoe (1664) stated, "costume and ornament are arrived to the heights of magnificence" (93), once more highlighting costume's place in the larger tapestry of the spectacular Restoration stage.

In addition to accounts from the period itself, those written later in the eighteenth century reflecting back on the practices of the Restoration offer additional insights into the role of costume in making the production of spectacle. As Thomas Davies reports:

> to render the pleasure of theatrical representation compleat [sic], the delusion must be uniformly supported in everything which appertains to the play. 'Tis not sufficient that the author writes with knowledge, and the comedian acts with propriety; everything must contribute to the general deception; dress must mark out the country and rank of the person, the scenery paint out the place of action, and music correspond with the passions of the characters and the incidents of drama; in short, every decoration must contribute to throw light upon the fable. Without this universal consent of parts, the pleasure will be imperfect, and the spectators deprived of the one essential requisite in entertainment. (Davies 1780, 33)

Here, Davies rearticulates the importance of numerous theatrical elements working in unison to create a complete sense of entertainment. Davies understood theatre as an art of deception. This deception, enhanced by the new developments in theatre practice, created the world of convincing fiction through scenery, music, the drama, and the dress.

In *An Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber* (1740), actor, manager, playwright, and poet laureate Colley Cibber, did use the term spectacle when referring to the work of playwright and poet Sir William Davenant. Davenant was "forced to add spectacle and music to action" when he introduced a "new species of plays, since

called dramatic operas, of which kind were the *Tempest, Psyche, Circe,* and others, all set off with the most expensive decorations of scenes and habits, with the best voices and dancers" in the mid 1600s (Cibber 1740, 57). Here Cibber refers to more than just the attire of Davenant's actors. He highlights the way the actors wore clothes, including their gestural repertoire, which breathed life into the fabric of the costumes. To match the other developments on the stage, costuming now had to be visually spectacular. In the quotation above, Cibber also captures the importance of visually appealing attire as he compares the clothing and physicality of the actors to the dressing of the stage, something heralded as part of the visually elaborate and spectacular advances of the Restoration theatre. As a playwright of the latter part of the Restoration period himself, Cibber was keenly aware of the requirements for theatrical success, and so his reflections provide yet further evidence of the importance placed on costume to create popular spectaculars in the theatre of the day.

Accounts like these demonstrate how theatrical enjoyment in the Restoration theatre relied heavily on magnificent visual presentation and show how costume had an interesting part to play in the creation of such spectacles. In the remainder of this paper, I will turn my attention to the specific ways in which clothing was designed to delight, reflect, and connect with the audience. As stated above, costume signalled character; and one of the most elaborately dressed characters in this type of theatre was the Fop. The character of the Fop created a spectacle not only on stage but also in the audience, as actors and audience mimicked and celebrated their sartorial spectacle. On and off stage, the Fop was part of the performance.

There is extensive research exploring the connection between sartorial pleasure and the stage Fop, including important work by Kristina Straub (1992), Michèle Cohen (1996), J. L. Styan (1996), Philip Carter (1997), Amanda Bailey (2007 and 2013), and E. K. Atwood (2013). The character of the Fop, also known as a cox comb, a dandy, or *beaux*, was pervasive in both theatrical and societal spheres in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. As Staves (1982) notes, Fops were not merely a theatrical convention, rather foppery was a "historical phenomenon" (414). Originating in France and adopted in England under the rule of the Charles II, the Fop had an interest in the latest fashion. He wore garments made of fine fabrics and large wigs. He wore makeup and brandished props, such as a handkerchief or snuff box (Carter 1997, 40-41). In his account from 1699, Jean de La provides a vivid picture of the everyday figure of the Fop, upon whom these theatrical stereotypes were based.

> The Fops and coxcombs are singular in their dress, their hats are broad, their sleeves are larger, and their coats of clear another cut than those of other men; they frequent all public places, that they may be taken notice of: whilst the man of sense leaves the fashion of his clothes to his tailor. It is as great a weakness to be out of fashion as to be in it [.... They] rather take up with the

> most extravagant ornaments, the most indifferent drapery; nay, the fancy of the Painter, which is neither agreeable to the air of the face. (Bruyére 1699, 532)

Bruyére's description highlights the layers of decoration used in the presentation of the offstage Fop. He exuded vanity and ornamentation; he was spectacular and he made a spectacle of himself.

Converted onto the stage, the Fop and his interest in clothing and fashion became one of his most notable contributions to the comedy of many Restoration plays, a caricature about whom regular comments were made on his extravagant dress and who featured in scenes that focused on his vanity. These were coupled with scenes of dressing and undressing, to accentuate the Fop's folly. As Phillip Carter contends: "The image of the heavily decorated fops exuding wig powder, powder and perfumes, and carrying all manner of accessories including canes, swords and ribbons proved a stock figure in accounts detailing the hazards of the modern world" (1997, 42). In relation to comedy specifically, J. L. Styan states:

> stage costume was always "modern dress," since the actor had to compete in appearance with the beaux in the audience, often wearing the patron's discarded clothes. His ability to wear his wardrobe well frequently became a source of humour in the lines, and was at the heart of the fop as a character. The principle item was a highly embroidered coat reaching to his knees, with noticeably wide cuffs and pockets low about his legs. Lace and ribbon trimmed his shirt and his shoes displayed a pair of high red heels. He wore or carried a plumed hat at all times, and his hair was as long as he could grow it—by the end of the century it was necessary to wear a full-bottomed wig that tumbled over the shoulders to provide the masses of curls deemed necessary. By that time cheeks of lacquered rouge punctuated with beauty spots were also the fashion for men as well as women. The vanity of the fop draws further attention to the spectacle of sartorial presentation. (Styan 1996, 244)

The humour of the stage Fop was achieved through the replication of spectacular and ostentatious fashion in the audience. The audience and the stage reflected each other. Playful and mocking, this reflection created a level of understanding that bonded the stage and auditorium.

In their examination of the visual elements of performance, Elaine Aston and George Savona (1991) identify the numerous ways in which visual semiotics function to inform a spectator's understanding of the narrative, setting, and the meaning of the presentation, created through an intricate system of observable signs. They consider the actor as both part of the functioning of character and as a sign in and of itself. Aston and Savona argue that costume serves a function beyond the visual and towards a representation of a particular set of characteristics, helping to make the actor in any era easily recognisable to their audience, as well as presenting

opportunities for the players and the playwright, producers and directors to comment on social circumstance relevant to the day (46). This is particularly true of the Restoration and the Fop. Indeed, as Styan argues:

> the clothes called such attention to themselves that they spoke eloquently of character and attitudes as soon as the actor stepped on the stage, and the actor's knowledge of how, or how not to wear them provided a regular source of satirical comment in the dialogue. (1986, 45)[3]

Michael Kirby (1972), also contends that the "effect of clothing on stage [is] pronounced" (3).

> A performer wearing only black leotards and Western boots might easily be identified as a "cowboy." This, of course, indicates the symbolic power of costume in performance. [...] If the performer moves (acts) like a cowboy, the identification is made much more readily. If he is merely himself, the identification might not be made at all. (ibid.)

Here Kirby draws on the idea of a non-matrixed performer—those carrying out the actions determined for them by the characters they are representing, drawing on similar ideas to Styan. This thinking can be applied to the role of the Fop and his indicative costume: through the character's embodiment of his costume, or what Cibber called habit—traits such as the tossing of a wig, strutting in a manner representative of a Fop's walk—and the actor's skill in incorporating other gesture and physical action into performance, the semiotic function of the costume is enhanced. For the Restoration theatre audience, the costuming of the Fop presented a system of signs which demonstrated an overly ostentatious character who flaunted his elaborate personal design as a means of representing and sharing elements of his character with his audience (Elam 2003, 13; Ashton and Savona 1991).

Surviving images of the Fop do much to reinforce the sign systems explained above. The illustration replicated here (see fig. 1) shows Colley Cibber, a well-known producer and performer of Fops in his own time: one Lord Foppington. Here we see his elaborate and intricately designed costume realised. With the multiple layers of luxurious fabric, Lord Foppington's costume demonstrates his class and status.

The fabric used in the costume appears to be expensive and sumptuous. The wig is well maintained, it has a significant amount of hair, which, when coupled with his many accessories, captures the ornamental design and visual impressiveness of Lord Foppington. With the snuff in hand, hat under arm, and his handkerchief

3 While semiotic theory was not "invented" until the twentieth century, retrospectively applying a notion of representation and its relation to the Restoration world outside the theatre, particularly through costume, presents us with an opportunity to illuminate further the potential intent, purpose, and impact embedded in theatrical presentation and the Fop. In his influential book, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* (2003), Keir Elem traces the developments of semiotic thinking in relation to the theatre and actors, across time, at length.

Figure 1. Colley Cibber as Lord Foppington. Copyright Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Reproduced with permission.

hanging loosely in his hand, Cibber as Fop is showcasing, through his embodiment of the character together with his dress, how he should be viewed. The image also projects the restrictive nature of the costume, providing some evidence to support the account of the preferred onstage movement and performance of the Fop.

Colley Cibber's portrait as Lord Foppington is one of a number of surviving images of the Fop at this time. The most interesting of these is a further illustration of Cibber dressed as himself, but wearing similar clothes to Lord Foppington. Comparing the image of Lord Foppington in Figure 1, with Cibber as himself in Figure 2, the connection between the actor and costume, performer and spectator, and onstage and offstage representations become even clearer.

In this illustration, the visual elements of Cibber's "real hair" resemble that of his character. His clothing shows some level of foppish refinement, but without the embodiment of the Lord Foppington character—without the pose, the posture, the adornments (his hat, snuff box, and handkerchief), his foppishness is lacking in spectacle; suggesting that the theatrical Fop was an exaggerated, embellished, and caricatured version of reality. As Geoffrey Ashton (1997) explains, the "subject of a theatrical portrait inspires a sort of dual recognition on the part of the viewer [...] in these pictures actual persons and their fictional personae coalesce to form a single image" (cited in Wigston Smith 2007, 72). The sartorial design of the Fop, therefore, became one of the key features in Cibber's theatrical and personal construction as an actor. The elaborate and highly decorated costumes in Figures 1 and 2 show how his on and offstage personae reflected each other, positioning the Fop as one of the more visually impressive characters on the Restoration stage, but requiring the actions of the actor to make it truly spectacular. As Charles Hopkins recorded:

> The stage takes examples from the Town. The Scene must really be acted in the World before it comes to be expose'd: so that whatever appears Vicious or Ridiculous, is owing to the Wickedness of the Times, not to the Theatre. (Hopkins 1698, 12)

In so doing, the stage acted as a mirror on which the Fop famously gazed. Drawing attention to the clothing of characters, playwrights ensured the audience were encouraged to experience the spectacle as a reflection and commentary on society. Surviving texts from the period capture this in exquisite detail, providing a lasting snapshot of the relationship between the audience and the stage in the Restoration period. An example is the prologue to *The Mistake* (1706):

> With audiences composed of belles and beaux,
> The first dramatic rule is, Have good clothes...
> To charm the gay spectator's gentle breast,
> In lace and feather tragedy's expressed,
> And heroes die unpitied, if ill dressed. (Vanbrugh 1706, A3)

Figure 2. Colley Cibber dressed as himself. Copyright Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Reproduced with permission.

The connection between costume and role in this prologue is important, as it demonstrates the power expected of the costume to display character—confirming that much of the spectacle of the Fop was determined by how elaborate, fitting, and visually pleasing (and accurate) its sartorial design could be.

William Hogarth's *The Laughing Audience*, (see fig. 3), captures this mirroring between auditorium and the stage on a larger scale. Hogarth showcases the variety of spectators attending the theatre, and in the back row we see the Fops. Hogarth has paid close attention to their lavish clothing, and by replicating their exaggerated physicality, has recreated and reinforced their identity. Their hair is preened and part of the overall image to be admired. Here, the Fops are the main spectacle, for while other audience members (towards the front) appear to replicate the fashion of periwigs, they seem dishevelled, unkempt.[4]

In addition, Hogarth's image shows the Fops looking away from the stage, and in doing so, positions them to be viewed. Hogarth appears conscious of making the Fop the central figure in the picture, just as the actor on stage would have been. The Fop in the audience is, therefore, part of the spectacle created and consumed within this representation of the theatre.

As in many periods in theatrical history, the lending of clothing by theatre patrons as costumes for actors (a habit which Styan (1996) commented on in the above quotation) ensured that the audience member was made famous, or infamous. Roger Boyle the Earl of Orrery's performance of *Henry V* from 1664 provides a perfect example of the borrowings of lavish and important clothing. As John Downes's *Roscius Anglicanus* confirms, Boyle as Henry V was dressed in the Duke of York's 1661 coronation suit, and the character of Owen Tutor in the King's (Downes 1708; see also Milhous and Hume 1987, 52 and 61). While it was not permitted to dress beyond your class in everyday society, the rules were not the same for the stage; and so the lending or replication of garments created a bond between the audience and the actors, producing a public parade of contemporary fashion. As Ashton records:

> Contemporary fashion in both male and female dress was reproduced on the stage, but often using unusually bright colours and large quantities of braid, sequins, and other variegated glitter—all the better to create an effect in the subdued and somewhat unsatisfactory lighting of the theatre. Theatrical portraits, therefore, often have a slight feeling of caricature about the costume, as well as the sitter's person. The heightened pose of gesture is paralleled by the heightened costume. (Ashton 1997, xxviii)

4 A periwig is a highly stylised wig of a kind formerly worn by men and women, and retained by judges and barristers as part of their professional dress today.

Figure 3. William Hogarth, *The Laughing Audience* (1733). Copyright Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Reproduced with permission.

For those in the pit not lucky enough to own such lavish and expensive items themselves, this would have been an opportunity to gaze at, envy, and perhaps ridicule the clothing of the elite.

As Aoife Monks (2009) establishes, "the auditorium is a place of social performance and display, in which gazes are exchanged and gendered" (35). The Restoration theatre also acted as a representational space, offering spectators the opportunity to be seen and, as already suggested, to be part of the display. With some theatres offering the opportunity for spectators to sit "on" the stage—above it at the back, or in raised boxes—the architecture positioned many of the spectators as being on display as well. In an account from Thomas Betterton from 1709, the audience was so much a part of the performance space that he recalls the "Stage itself was covered with Gentlemen and Ladies, and when the Curtain was drawn up, it discovered even there a very splendid Audience" (119). Such a practice continued into the latter part of the eighteenth century. As many prologues and epilogues to plays stand in testament, the Fops in the audience were used on these occasions to turn the gaze outward towards the spectators, reflecting that which was being shown and parodied on the stage.

> HE who comes hither with design to hiss,
> And with a bum revers'd, to whisper Miss,
> To comb a Perriwig, or to shew gay cloathes,
> Or to vent Antique nonsence with new oathes,
> Our Poet welcomes as the Muses friend,
> For hee'l by irony each play commend. (A.B. 1672, 33)

In the above address, the playwright draws attention to the Fops' need to preen and show off, listing in detail their follies. As Lisa Freeman (2013) explains, there was "[n]o single controlling gaze regulat[ing] the space of performance in the eighteenth century; the power of performance was routinely shared and exchanged between audience and performers" (5). In this way, the Fops in the audience were performing in much the same way as the actors, for as Monk (2009) suggests, "wearers of fashionable clothing need opportunities to display this clothing, because the logic of dress is fundamentally theatrical" (36).

Another celebrated Fop appears in George Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676). Sir Fopling Flutter, described by John Richetti as an "overdressed aristocrat, a foolish and self-absorbed dandy or fop" (in Etherege 2014, 6), is the focus of much attention because of his clothing and vanity. In the following scene, the characters of Dorimant and Medley discuss Sir Flutter's visual appearance, drawing attention to his self-importance in relation to his outwardly appearance.

L. TOWN. He's very fine.

EMIL. Extreme proper!

SIR FO. A slight suit I made to appear in at my first arrival—not worthy your consideration, Ladies.

DOR. The pantaloon is very well mounted.

SIR FO. The tassels are new and pretty.

MED. I never saw a coat better cut.

SIR FO. It makes me show long-wasted, and, I think, slender.

DOR. That's the shape our ladies dote on.

Med. Your breech, though, is a handful too high, in my eye, Sir Fopling.

SIR FO. Peace, Medley, I have wished it lower a thousand times, but a Pox on it, it will not be.

L. TOWN. His Gloves are well fringed, large and graceful.

SIR FO. I was always eminent for being bien ganté.

EMIL. He wears nothing but what are originals of the most famous hands in Paris.

SIR FO. You are in the right, Madam.

L. TOWN. The Suit?

SIR FO. Barroy.

EMILIA. The garniture?

SIR FO. Le Gras––

MED. The shoes!

SIR FO. Piccar

DOR. The periwig?

SIR FO. Chedreux.

TOWN. AND EMILIA. The gloves?

SIR FO. Orangerie—You know the smell, ladies!—Dorimant, I could find in my heart for an amusement to have a gallantry with some of our English ladies. (Etherege 2014, 70)

The detailing of Flutter's individual items of clothing exaggerates his importance as a form of visual pleasure for himself, his fellow characters, and his audience. In addition, the itemising of costume in such detail offers the audience the opportunity to find connections between the stage and themselves, ensuring they remain competitive in fashionable excellence. As Alan Botica (1986) argues, the audience judged the actors, "not only by the standards of dress set within the play, but by the standards set by the spectators around them" (292).

Similarly, in *Love's Last Shift* (1696), Colley Cibber focuses on Sir Novelty's vanity, and through the character of Hillaria, draws attention to his physical appearance, including his clothing and visage. As Cibber himself embodied the role of Sir Novelty, bringing to the character his own personal interests in foppery, his play exemplifies the visual delight associated with the design of the Fop by drawing the audience's attention to the intended spectacle of the costuming (Salmon 2004). In this scene, Cibber purposely highlights the vanities and follies of the Fop, using them to poke fun at the spectacle he is making of himself.

> SIR NOV: Pray madam, how do I look today? What cursedly? I'll warrant; with a more hellish complexion than a stale actress in a morning—I don't know, madam;—but the devil take me, in my mind, I am a very ugly fellow.
>
> NAR: Oh! Sir Novelty, this is unanswerable; 'tis hard to know the brightest part of the diamond. [...] But you Sir Novelty, are a very true original, the very Pink of Fashion: I'll warrant you there's not a milliner in town but has got an estate on you [...]
>
> HILL: Oh! Mr Worthy, we are admiring Sir Novelty, and his new suit, did you ever see so sweet a fancy? He is as full of variety as a good play.
>
> E. WOR: He's a very pleasant comedy indeed, madam, and dressed with a great deal of good satyr, and no doubt may oblige both the stage and the town, especially the ladies. (Cibber 1696, 32)

By focusing on the character's costume as part of the play's narrative, the playwright makes the adornment of the Fop central to his purpose. Cibber's scene demonstrates a good likeness of the character of the Fop, similar to those found in other literary sources of the time, such as jest books.

> A conceited Fop having dressed himself very gay, and being with his Mistress, often Peep'd in the Glass, and Careen's his Wig; then shifting towards her, said, Madam, who do you think is the prettiest Man you ever saw? (J.S. 1693, 110-11)

The account from the jest book, above, showcases both the widespread knowledge and understanding of the Fops' display, including their clothing, makeup, and hair, but also the societal response to their outward demeanour; framing them as someone to be laughed at.

In wider Restoration society, hair (its shape, height, and adornment), a key feature of the Fop's display, carried details of social significance. As Margaret K. Powell and Joseph Roach establish, at "work and at play, big hair became one of the most visible ways of marking different social roles, occupations, aspirations and conditions" (2004, 80). As Joseph Addison recorded in his *Spectator* essay in 1854, the "ordinary method of making a hero, is to clap a huge plume of feathers upon his head, which rises so very high, that there is often a greater length from his chin to the top of his head, than to the sole of his foot" (312). Addison's account relays the frequency with which the periwig and elaborate hair decorations were used to identify character. He brings to life the visual image of the headdress and reiterates its place in theatrical spectacle with the discussion of feathers positioned upon an actor's head. But such a display also presented a significant problem for the actors who wore periwigs. Due to their elaborateness, the weight was often considerable and restricted the actors in their movement. As Addison (1854) corroborates, the size and elaborateness of the headdresses "embarrasses the Actor, who is forced to hold his neck extremely still and steady all the while he speaks" (489).

Periwigs proved to be as equally popular onstage as off, being, as Thomas Davies records, a mainstay for men of a certain class until the early eighteenth century, and demonstrating, once again, the way stage and society reflected and supported each other.

> The heads of the English actors were, for a long time, Covered with large full-bottomed periwigs, a fashion introduced in the reign of Charles II, which was not entirely diluted in public till about the year 1720. Addison, Congreve, and Steele, met, at Button's Coffee-house, in large, flowing, flaxen, wigs; Booth, Wilks and Cibber, when fully-dressed wore the same. (Davies 1785, 3:84)

By presenting characters onstage that drew on the visual spectacle of costume in everyday life, commenting and reflecting upon the customs of fashions in wider society, the stage highlighted, championed, ridiculed, and exploited the foibles and vanities of those who followed the hair and clothing fashions of the day. As Aileen Ribeiro (2005) notes, "wigs were status symbols precisely because they were expensive, difficult to wear with ease, and require correct manners and deportation" (239). In his wig, the Fop promoted his status by drawing attention to his appearance and his skill in the wearing of spectacular clothing and costume.

Both clothing and costume spoke to the audience of status, class, and character—life was placed on stage, dressed as the street, and played for laughs. This was a runway of sorts for the fashion of the day, to be copied, replicated, or avoided. The Fop's costume spoke of vanity, self-interest, and a concern with elaborate visual (re)presentation.

> Intricately costumed and coiffed female (and male) bodies attracted the admiring gaze of spectators. Comic types, such as fops and the fine lady, revealed their foibles through their costumes, and tragic kings and queens often appeared in aristocratic cast-offs. (Rosenthal 2007, 160)

Finding ways to draw the "admiring gaze" of the audience through costume was important to actors if they were to secure their place as part in the spectacle of the Restoration stage. Demonstrating its contribution to narrative, or signalling recognisable character types, costume was used to give further clarity and reality to the characters, and the actors and actresses playing them. Drawing attention to the clothing, playwrights ensured their spectators were aware of the spectacle designed for them. By considering the visual and semiotic impact costume had within these plays, through performance not only played to but also within audiences during the Restoration, we confirm the importance of fashion to the revelation of Restoration spectacle. In concert with an ever-increasing spectacular nature of the playhouse, the elaborateness of costume as a simple theatrical device was developed to support the spectacle that was Restoration theatre.

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